

## Matching domestic manufacturers with viable business opportunities

MEP is conducting Supplier Scouting processes to connect government agencies that have Buy American provision requirements with U.S. manufacturers who can make the products they need. Leveraging MEP's vast knowledge of local manufacturer capabilities from across the nation, MEP is identifying manufacturers' production and technical capabilities to match them up with viable business opportunities that would have otherwise gone to foreign suppliers.

In support of Buy American and Buy America provisions of a range of federal procurements, including those funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), NISTMEP has been working with the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Transit, Federal Highway, and Maritime Administrations, and with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). The Buy America and Buy American provisions basically state that, subject to certain exceptions, appropriated funds for subject programs may not be used to purchase steel, iron, or manufactured goods that are not produced in the U.S.

The companies identified by MEP for the DOT Federal Transit Administration as being capable and interested in pursuing the \$400 million girder rail infrastructure opportunity were able to directly share their insight regarding domestic girder rail production with top level DOT officials, including the Deputy Secretary of Transportation, which will be included in future rail product decisions.

The recent Buy American Supplier Scouting activities conducted for NIST showed that MEP was able to locate U.S. manufacturers that make near identical products, some of better quality and even lower price, than the foreign made items being sought.

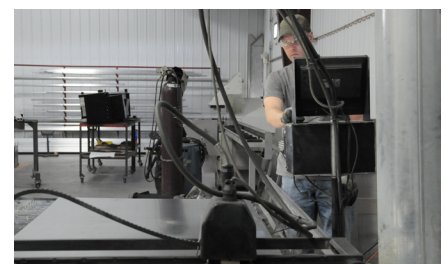
The MEP network of centers across the country is ideally situated to match Buy American opportunities with capable and interested U.S. manufacturers. MEP Buy American Supplier Scouting is an ideal instantiation of how the national MEP System can serve the growth and competitiveness needs of U.S. manufacturers. Bringing these opportunities to companies is a great, value-adding way in which MEP Centers can have business interactions with clients, which can in turn transition to other business interactions between MEP Centers and these manufacturers.

In this economy it is a win, win for everyone!

For additional information, please contact NIST MEP:

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# BUY AMERICAN SUPPLIER SCOUTING SUCCESS

*“...companies are so very grateful to be contacted about the Buy American program. Typically, companies that we contact are excited about the program and even if they are not a match, they thank us for the consideration. And they encourage us to call with future opportunities!*

*Thank you again for coordinating this program to identify American manufacturers. It is helping us as an MEP to make great business connections for our companies.”*

Marie Griffin  
Industrial Extension Service at NC State University

Most of the scouting activity that the MEP network has provided has been for the DOE EERE where over 80 products have been scouted. Other scouting processes have also been conducted for the DOT and NIST, and MEP Buy American Supplier Scouting results to date are summarized below.

- The MEP network has found interested companies to match the capabilities needed for nearly \$6 million of the over \$8 million in DOE EERE's ARRA Buy American contract opportunities. The average dollar amount for each opportunity that the MEP has found a company with capabilities is \$150,000.
- Two companies identified by MEP have been named by the DOE to their grantees as acceptable suppliers to produce the items subject to the Buy American provision.
- Searching for a U.S. supplier is performed within a 10-day scouting window and averages about a day in billable hours.
- The service fee for each match that was deemed viable by DOE to initially received \$1,500 and now receives \$2,500. To date over \$75,000 in service fees has been awarded to successful MEP Centers.
- MEP Centers that have actively participated in Buy American Supplier Scouting for a combination of the DOE, DOT, and NIST activities pursued thus far represent AL, AK, CA, HI, DE, CO, GA, WA, MI, IL, AR, PA, WI, FL, NE, KY, VA, WV, NC, NJ, ND, SD, IA, KS, LA, IN, NV, OH, OR, TX, TN, UT, WY, MO, CT, SC, VT, ME, MT, NY states and Puerto Rico.
- The three most active MEP Centers are CONNStep, PRiMEX and North Carolina MEP who have received \$20,500.00 in total service fee awards.